Constantinople, July 3d 1838.

Dear Brethren,

I rec'd at Argos three or four weeks since your letter of Dec. 26. 1837 written by Mr. O. K. Campbell, & having some leisure I reply to it here, though absent from my station.

The peculiar circumstances of the Greek mission render impracticable at present that rapid extension of operations which may be attained in many of our foreign missions, & which is so desirable wherever it can be attained. I make this remark because you inquire as to the qualifications which may be more especially demanded in missionaries to Greece. It is not improbable (though not yet quite certain) that the station at Argos may be given up & that I may be removed either to this place or to Smyrna. Br. Benjamin has already removed to Athens and it may be considered as decided that should I with my family remain at Argos the importance of that station will not warrant the coming of another missionary family. Nor do I think of any other opening in Greece proper — unless (which I hope a gracious providence may prevent) Br. Leybourn's health should so entirely fail that he sh'd be obliged to leave the mission. Of this there is certainly some fear at this moment.

It would much exceed the limits of a letter here I to attempt to explain the circumstances which have concurred for a long time past to produce on our minds the conviction

that it is not our duty to aim at present at the extension of our mission. It is perhaps sufficient to say that the Mission at its last annual meeting, after attending to the comparative claims of Argos & Smyrna, unanimously resolved to recommend to the Pru. Com. that I should be transferred to the latter place. One reason for this was the opening there for Greek preaching. Sabbath before last, when there on my way to this place I preached in Greek in the chapel of the Dutch Consul Mr. VanLennep, & though notice was given only the day before about 50 persons were present. While attending the Miss.y Conference there last autumn Mr. King and I preached twice each to congregations of from 50 to 100 persons. We have never had anything like so good audiences in Greece. Another reason which determined our Mission to vote in favor of my transfer to Smyrna was the existence of the mission press there. Still the brethren here strongly urge my coming to this place where there are more Greeks than in Smyrna, Prevesa, Tschesme, Athens, Argos, & Neopolis united, & where at present no one of the missionaries makes use of the Greek language, Mr. Goodell using the Turkish, Mr Dwight the Armenian & Mr. Schauffler the Hebrew Spanish. Mr. Homes also, who is expected to return here before long, is a miss.y to the Turks & will not probably pay any attention to Greek. — The question of my removal is in the hands of the Prudential Committee, & you will probably know

the result (unless the decision sh^d be referred back to us) sooner than we shall here.

But I am in danger of filling my sheet with my own matters. I must hasten to answer your inquiries.

I cannot insist too much on the importance of Biblical studies. But I have not room to enlarge.

A miss^y to the Greeks (whether in or out of Greece proper) ought to be well acquainted with their ancient language. His influence will greatly depend on this. He ought if possible to be acquainted with the writings of the Greek Christian Fathers, particularly Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory, & the Ch. historians. He must be come acquainted with them either before or after commencing his mission; & all that he can do while he has access to a large library is so much gain.

My impressions are in favor of an early consecration to the miss^y work. We have but a short time to live in this world. Let us make the most of it.

You inquire as to the importance of the sciences. They are important here chiefly because they have been exceedingly neglected by the Greeks hitherto. The knowledge of the Anc. Gr. Lang. & Lit. has been deemed until recently all that was essential to a good education. Inso far as it is the duty of the miss^y to promote a systematic & complete course of education, is it important that he should have a familiar acquaintance with the sciences. In a word, languages are cultivated in these regions, as the soul of an education, and the miss^y must be a linguist or he will find himself in the back-ground. Science is sadly neglected, & therefore the miss^y must be familiar with it in order to cultivate and to promote it among the people.

Your request about Circulars I will endeavor to bear in mind & mention to my Brethren on my return to Greece.

As to our domestic life I cannot be very particular for want of room. We hire help either male or female or both according to the size of our families very much as we wh. in places of the same size in America. — Family prayers we have generally once a day in English & once a day in Greek. — Our visits are

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chiefly made and rec.d on the Greek holidays, because the people are then most at leisure. The Sabbath however is their great visiting day, & we take care to prevent them from visiting us except for religious purposes. — I am, Dear Brethren,

Yours with christian affection

Elias Riggs.